6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

with the mad chief who spoke only Carib. Nevertheless, owing to the Carib's peculiar reticence, as much with one another as with strangers, this does not exclude the possibility of such an encounter having taken place. Likewise, according to present-day Caribs, his story of the army of coast-bound crabs met with in the mountains is either grossly exaggerated or refers to a small species known as the "soldat" or hermit crab—the "cirique" crab disliking the sea, and the other, black or white, land crabs being rarely found on the windward coast, or in the regions mentioned. Ober found a number of older men and women in Salybia who spoke an Indian dialect as their mother tongue, and even noted the persistence, in that late day, of the differentiation between men's and women's languages. He mentions the snake legend, and speaks of finding archeological remains in St. Vincent, but not in Dominica. (I have heard of, though not seen, old stone implements and "rocks with writing" on the wooded heights between the Akayu River and the Arsturi Ravine.) At the time of Ober's visits the so-called reserve was somewhat smaller than at present, but there were other Carib lands and settlements at North End (between the Pegoua and Marigot), Wesley (La Soie), Calibishie, Penville, Morne Caraïbe, and Délice.

In June 1903 the Carib Reserve in its present form was created by decree, and its boundaries delimited as extending from the Akayu (or Raymond) River (some say the Arsturi Ravine, and there seems to be no existing document to settle the matter) to Kuària (or Big River), a dry ravine, along the coast, inland, up the latter ravine to the ridge, and hence down the Ravine Pomme to the Pegoua River, which the boundary then follows up to Deux Branches, whence it cuts across in a straight line to the Akayu River. This decree made no attempt to define the status of the reserve, nor of its inhabitants and their chief. In point of fact, the Caribs merely continued their traditional custom of electing from their numbers a chief or headman (ûbutu), whose duty it is to advise and direct members of the tribe and to settle such disputes as may arise among them. For some years prior to 1930 this institution received a degree of official recognition, with remuneration to the extent of 10 shillings ($2.40) a month. In return for which the local government held the chief responsible for order within the reserve generally, and for the upkeep of the coastal bridle path through Carib territory.

In September 1930, a few days after the hurricane, and a month after my first visit, the so-called "Carib War" took place. Five negro policemen invaded the reserve, seized some tobacco and rum they alleged to be contraband, and made two arrests. Then, a dispute arising, they opened fire on an unarmed crowd of men, women, and children, killing two and injuring others. The Caribs in their turn set upon the police with stick and stone and chased them from

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
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wide, their chins well rounded. Mouths and lips are usually small or medium, the noses straight, and sometimes slightly flattened. Their eyes are rather small and deep-set, long and narrow (with the Mongoloid or epicanthic fold), though not as a rule oblique, and are fringed with long silky lashes. Their ears are large, long, and often lobeless. their feet small, broad, and extraordinarily high-arched.

PLATE II.—Map of Carib Reserve.

The girls are round-faced, plump, broad-shouldered, and remarkably straight in the loins. Men and women alike have little or no body hair. Their hue varies (apart from reasons of blood admixture), but is always distinct from any Eurafrican blend, being of a light coppery or "feuille morte" tinge, sometimes likened to dried cinnamon.

Like so many others of his race, the Dominica Indian is reticent by nature, sensitive, and quick to take offense, and given to occasional moods of melancholy and unreasonableness. Indifference, one of his best-known traits, coupled with innate shyness (the patois term "conquia" expresses what I mean here much better than our

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

773 When the people were troubled by the depredations of rats, P'tit François would invoke their king, and demand—it is said with success—that His Ratty Majesty keep his subjects in order.

A fragment of what I believe to be a very old legend was recounted to me by Fanfan as something that actually happened in the days of this wonderful chief.

At that time there lived in Salybia two brothers called Mâruka and Cimanâri, famous for the charms they made. They would go up to the house of the Tête-Chien [1] to find the Master Tête-Chien—the same who, when the earth was soft, made the Stairway of the Tête-Chien at Cinâru.[2] He is big, big, big, has a crest of diamond on his head, and crows just like a cock. Well, when they found him, they would take powdered tobacco and burn it before him on the blade of a paddle. Then that tête-chien would vomit, and all that he vomited was red "l'envers carafbe".[3] After that the snake would disappear gradually, and in his place came a young man "sans culotte" (naked). The young man said nothing about his being the Tête-Chien, but asked Mâruka and Cimanâri what it was they wanted, and instructed them, when they had told him, how they must use the envers carafbe to make their charms.

Mâruka and Cimanâri did not die in Salybia. When they felt old age approaching they went away to the other country. When they reached the shores of the Orinoco River they plunged into the stream, and when they came out on the opposite bank they had become two young lads again, and on the water where they had been there floated two turtle shells.

They never came back to Dominica, and at last one of them died; but the other, as far as I know, is still living there.

778 [13] Leaving the Stairway of the Tête-Chien, and going northward by way of the Maho, Gaulette, Salybia, and Crayfish Rivers almost to the present northern boundary of the Reserve, we come to the little hamlet of Bataka (or Baralçi), nestling on the hillside 15 minutes hard climb above the "highway." Most of the full-blooded Caribs remaining are to be found here today. The people of Bataka are not very well liked by the other Caribs, among whom they have a name for treachery and for practicing "piais," even against one another.

On the extremity of a narrow ridge opposite and beyond Bataka is perched a huge rock, itself some 60 feet in height, that overlooks the valley of the Pegoua, the ocean, and the Reserve. It is composed of a blackish, crumbling rock, and on its summit and from its precipitous sides grow vines and plants, a stunted scrub, and a kind of wild orchid. It is known as La Roche Pegoua, and is the home of a benevolent spirit about whom many tales are told, one of which is related below.

[1] Tête-Chien: "dog-headed" Antillean ameiva lizard, small but attaining up to 12 feet in length and the thickness of a man's thigh. Carib: wa-ca-gui.

[2] House of Tête-Chien; so-called. Rocky cliff in the heights of the Comaroy River, said to be much frequented by these snakes. Legendary home of the giant snake of this and other legends, said to have had a precious stone (variously called carbuncle, diamond) of extraordinary brilliance on its head, and which it was capable of covering with a sort of movable membrane, or eyelid, thus creating at will light or darkness in the forest. The Stairway of the Tête-Chien, so-called, is a formation of soft gritty or rotten rock of reddish color and apparently volcanic origin, which emerges from the soil on the crest of the ridge called Cinâru, above the Akayu River, and proceeds in a series of "steps" down the side of the cliff to the sea, under which it continues and can be followed from a boat for quite a distance.

[3] L'envers carafbe: a species of red maranta whose roots are said to "pisin," and which is used only for charms. When planting, it is usual to place a piece of silver in the ground along with it. Has become rare.

9: Ober N-5 (1876-1878) 1895
ST13 Callinago ST13

In the island of St. John are some rocks covered with incised figures, which are called the "Carib rocks,"—rude petroglyphs without meaning; but undoubtedly of aboriginal origin. Throughout the Greater Antilles, I cannot recall any of these petroglyphs, and they seem to be peculiar to the Carib area, other and finer ones being found in the island of St. Vincent. The descendants of the Caribs to-day are confined to two islands only, Dominica (which was the first land sighted by Columbus on his second voyage) and St. Vincent, the former between latitude fifteen and sixteen north, and the latter in latitude thirteen. They are described in my book on these islands,[1] published fifteen years ago, and I will not repeat my descriptions, except to state that there are some twenty families of pure blood remaining in Dominica, and perhaps half a dozen in St. Vincent. There may be three hundred in each island, but so intimately mixed with the negroes that their distinguishing features are nearly obliterated. They dwell on the windward or eastern coast of either island, in each having a portion of land assigned them, which they cultivate in common, or which, at least, is not owned in severalty. They subsist upon the fruits of their agricultural labors and the sea, eked out with the scant products of the chase, consisting mainly of small birds, agoutis, and iguanas. Their huts are almost as primitive as at the time of discovery, being constructed of palm logs and thatched with palm leaves. In Dominica most of them speak the French patois (a legacy from the former owners of the island), and in St. Vincent, English; being Catholics in the former and Church of England in the latter, as to their religious faith. All vestiges of their native religion have apparently disappeared, although they still have a belief in the jumbies and wood-spirits of the negroes. They are to-day gentle and easily managed, showing no trace of the warlike spirit of their ancestors; in shape they are robust, well-formed, with

[1] See "Camps in the Caribbees," by F. A. Ober. Boston, 1879.

THE CARIBS OF THE ANTILLES

Their Present-Day Representatives on the island of Dominica

122 /127/ In the course of a recent voyage to the Antilles, on board the yacht Resolute, I had the good fortune to meet a few survivors of the Indians who inhabited part of these islands at the time of the arrival of Europeans in the New World. /These were/ the Caribs, (1)

1. One says either Caraibe or Carib.

[61] of whom a hundred of pure stock still exist, relegated to a corner of
[31] Dominica. I must first of all thank M. Pierre Lebaudy for the alacrity with which he agreed to undertake the expedition which permitted us to reach the Carib territory. In addition, we found an invaluable aid in the person of the Governor of the island and a most sympathetic reception on the part of the English colony, particularly the engineer Mr. Noble, who procured horses and porters for us, and carried his kindness so far as to accompany us on our trip and serve as our guide.

Before summing up the observations I was able to make in the course of the trip, I believe it would perhaps be useful to recall in a few words who the Caribs of the Antilles were and what is known of their origin and their migrations.

101 When Christopher Columbus discovered the Lesser Antilles, he found them inhabited by Carib Indians, intrepid sailors, adept fishermen, proud, admitting no domination and justly feared by their
[24] neighbors, since they had the reputation of devouring their enemies after having killed them. (2) This population made a striking con-

2. It would be from the word canibi, one of the names given the Caribs, that the term "cannibul" comes.

trast then with the peaceful Indian peoples who inhabited the large islands and who were /128/ Arawaks, or more exactly Tainos, the latter term having been reserved for the Arawaks who had emigrated to the Antilles. Indeed, the Arawaks according to present ethnographic data, were not the first inhabitants of these islands; they had supplanted there a more ancient race, about whom we have no information as yet. The Arawaks, who probably came from /130/ South

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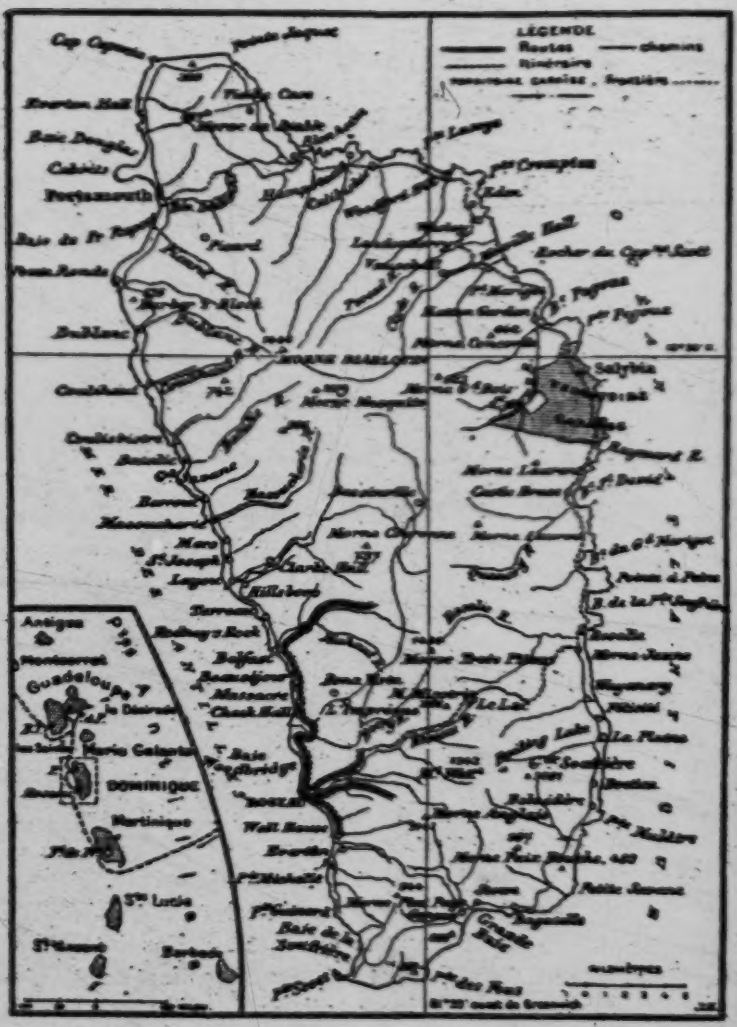

1. Map of Dominica

175 "without finding anything besides forests and three or four small clearings full of banana trees" and saw there "the most beautiful trees in the world," he seems to describe it as it is today.

As for the several thousand Caribs who existed in St. Vincent in 1735, they mixed rapidly with the /133/ blacks, whence the name "black Caribs" or Caraïbes noirs by which they are known. They were banished for the most part by the English, in 1795 and 1796, to the island of Ruatan and to Trujillo, on the northern coast of Honduras, where they have remained. In the course of the 18th and 19th centuries, the islands of St. Vincent and Dominica were also invaded by European colonists and by blacks who were becoming more and more numerous, so that the Caribs disappeared from there almost completely; there still existed 192 of them, more or less mixed with black blood, in St. Vincent, in 1881, but there are none today. In Dominica, their fate threatened to be the same if the English authorities, always /134/ foresighted, had not established a reservation on the island where the last representatives of a race on the point of dying out live in peace, in the very environment in which it existed at the time of the conquest.

131 The territory reserved for the Caribs is situated on the eastern shore of the island. In order to reach it from Roseau, the principal port, situated in the southwest, where we were anchored, it was necessary to cross the entire width of the island, following paths which were most uneven and impassable as far as carriages were concerned. We traversed on horseback the 24 kilometers which separated Roseau from the village of Rosalie, and then had to go up the eastern shore from south to north, for about 17 kilometers, passing Castle Bruce, in order to reach the southern tip of the Carib territory, which is called the "Carib district" or the "Carib reservation" by the English. This district is bounded on the north by a curved line in the form of a prolonged S stretched in a general north-east-south-west direction, cut in half by the 15° 30' line North Latitude; on the west by the path of the Two Branch river, from which the boundary line extends for some distance to form with it a rectangle which does not belong to the Caribs; on the south, by a straight line, in a general west-east direction, slanting a little to the south, to the Rayward River, whose course it follows to its mouth; finally, on the east by the Atlantic. This territory has an area of 3700 acres, that is, 1497 hectares 39

[133] areas, or in round numbers, 1500 hectares; it is very uneven and high mountains surround narrow ravines, where spring water trickles.

10:Neveu-Lemaire--5a K-5 (ca. 1920) 1921 ST13 Callinago
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3. Map of the Carib Territory

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

W. H. HODGE and DOUGLAS TAYLOR *

THE ETHNOBOTANY OF THE ISLAND CARIBS OF DOMINICA [1]

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the earliest contacts between North America and South America was made almost certainly by way of the West Indies. Precolonial records of men and materials from these islands are therefore of unique interest to the Americanist. Unfortunately now when it is possible to investigate primitive Antillean societies we find that we are too late, for the aborigines have nearly all disappeared. Nor can we rely on the early chroniclers of this region (15) (35) (42) for their bulky writings are filled not with valuable notes of native «curiosities» but rather with lengthy accounts of their own personal problems.

Where local terrain in the West Indies permitted white settlement and exploitation much of the native flora and fauna, including man himself, disappeared. Among such elements was the Island Carib. Like other Indian groups of the Antilles he was naturally opposed to the adoption of the sort of production organized solely for the enrichment of white men. With the Carib went many of the plant products that he used for food and drink, shelter, comfort and adornment, medicines and charms. These native species were for the most part replaced by imported species which had proved of greater commercial value to the invader. Fortunately among the Antilles there proved to be at least one sanctuary, the island of Dominica.

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[1] The British West Indian island of Dominica, sometimes confused with the Dominican Republic in Hispaniola, is one of the Lesser Antilles and is located between 15°-10′ – 15°-40′ north latitude and 61°-44′ – 61°-30′ west longitude, more or less equidistant between the French islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique.

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13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

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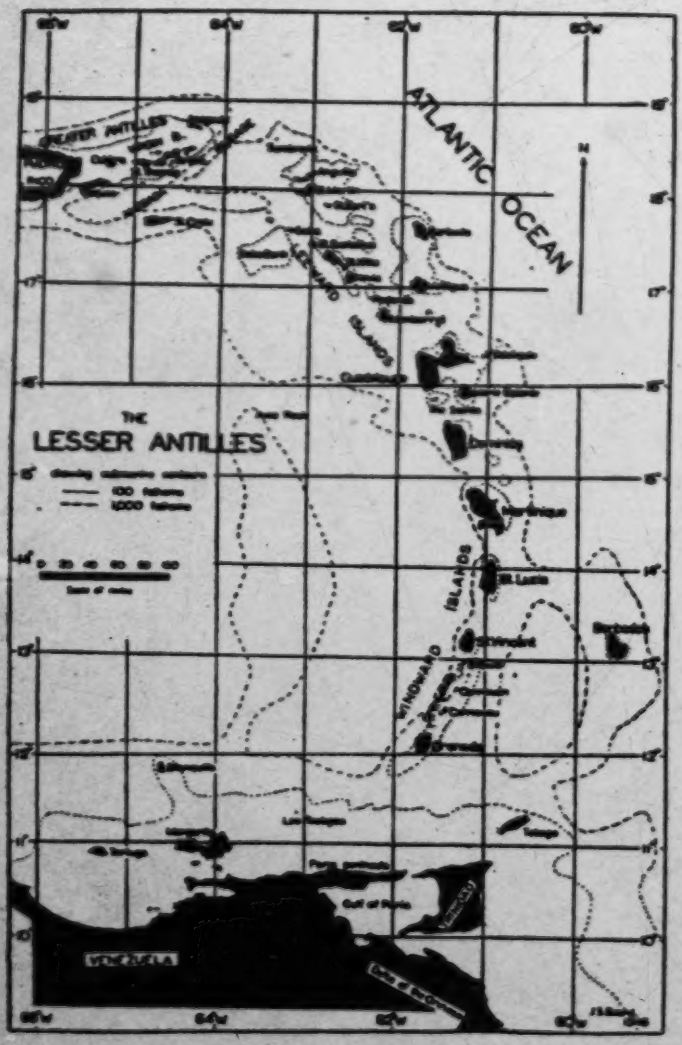

Fig. 1 – The Lesser Antilles showing the central position of Dominica (Courtesy of J. S. Beard).

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

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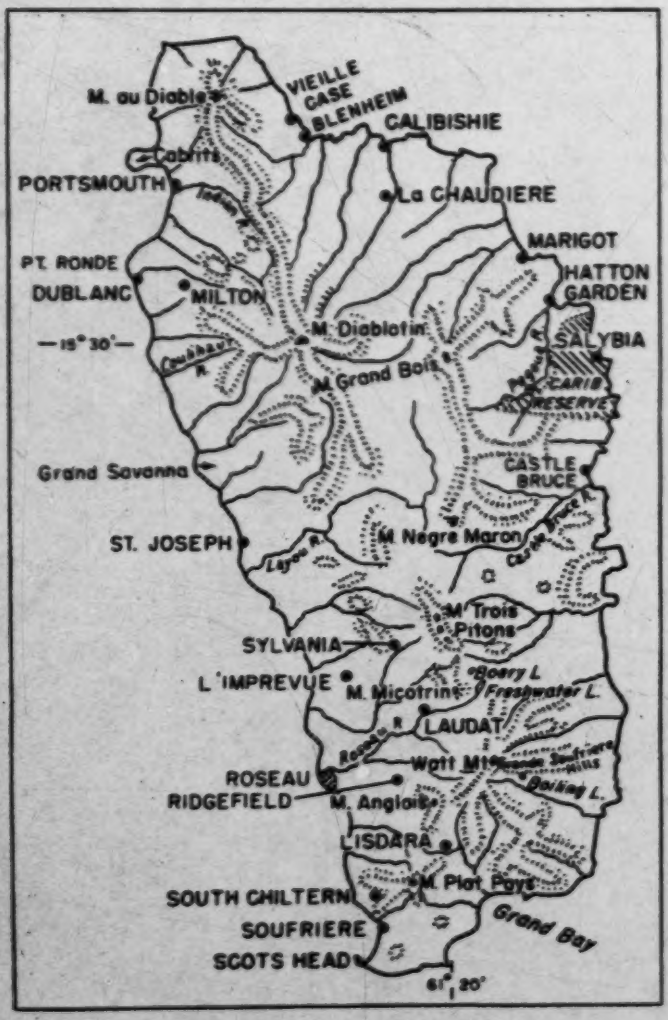

Fig. 2 – Dominica, showing location of the Carib Reserve on the windward coast. The island is about 30 miles long and up to 15 miles broad.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

called *bashéi*. Basketry « satchels » slung by a cord or band from the shoulder (*bahéle*), and « travel-baskets » carried in canoes or used in the home for storage (*iemadi*), are closely woven in twill or wickerwork and in a variety of patterns. Moreover, each such basket consists of a « head » and a « bottom » which telescope into one another; each of these in turn being made in duplicate of an outer « skin » and an inner « member » between which layers of cachibou leaves (*Calathea lutea*) are arranged in such a way as to render the container waterproof.

For obvious reasons, stone implements, bone fish-hooks, and (later) baked-clay griddles and bows and arrows ceased to be made as soon as they could be replaced by their more efficient European equivalents. Nor have hammocks or pottery been regularly made for the past hundred years. But most of the basketry, dugout canoes, bromelia fishing-lines, wooden mortars and pestles and troughs, cane-presses, and calabash vessels are still made and used; while horticulture of the « slash and burn » variety is still carried on by means of the billhookshaped « cutlass » and the dibble or digging stick.

In their gardens or provision-grounds, which were (and are) always situated on the interior heights behind their homes, various kinds of manioc and sweet potatoes predominated. « Pumpkins » (*wasáima*) and maize were secondary crops. Plantains (*baláka*), an importation from the Old World, and possibly bananas (of a variety called *bahábu*), were cultivated soon after the Conquest, and soon became very popular, as also did one tropical American species of yam (*Dioscorea trifida*, Island-Carib *bára*). The present-day predominance of other true yams from the Old World, oriental « dasheen » (chou de Chine), and New World tania (Island-Carib men *tádia*, women *uáke*) is of recent date among the Indians of Dominica. With the exception of tania, these crops would seem to have been taken over from the Negroes in the last thirty or forty years in order to offset a decline in game, wild foodstuffs, and fish.

Island-Carib men continued to learn and use a special vocabulary of Cariban ancestry, which gradually dwindled until, a generation before the last native speaker of the Dominican dialect died (about 1920), this consisted of little more than a score of words, among which were those for « I » (m. *da*, w. *nukáia*), « thou » (m. *amáro*, w. *bukáia*), « man » (m. *uákori*, w. *oiári*), and « woman » (m. *uári*, w. *kiaru*), employed in a language whose flexions, syntax, and other basic vocabulary were essentially Arawakan.

Until the present « Carib Reserve » was formed in 1903, the Indians were scattered in various settlements along the north, east, and south shores of Dominica. The reservation is situated near the middle of the windward coast, and comprises 3700 acres of rugged indented coastline to which spurs run down from a mountain chain running roughly north and south. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the Dominican Island-Carib had, according to du Tertre, acquired a few slaves; and it is probably with these that miscegenation started. Today the Reserve has about five hundred inhabitants, of whom not more than a fifth can reasonably be considered as « full-blooded » Amerindians.

Plant lore among the Carib may be roughly divided into three classes:

1. Species, wild or cultivated, which are or may be used for food or drink.

2. Species, wild or cultivated, which are or may be used for domestic purposes, including the making of dugouts and all implements and utensils pertaining to hunting, fishing, gardening, food gathering and preparation.